

STAT

ER: 60-777

13 SEP 1960

*card*  
Mr. Norman Ross  
Station WLS  
1230 West Washington Blvd.  
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Ross:

A transcript of your broadcast of August 31 over Station WLS in Chicago has recently been brought to my attention.

I just wanted to let you know that I agree with your sentiments one hundred percent and was delighted to see this approach taken by a responsible member of the press.

With very best wishes.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

Allen W. Dulles  
Director

STAT

O/DCI/   vgd 8 Sept 60

Distribution:

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✓ 1 - DCI

1 - Col Grogan

1 - ER w/transcript


1 - FMC

EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE

MEMORANDUM FOR: DCI

Norman Ross over WLS (Chicago) took Mr. Robert Berlin apart and also the CHICAGO AMERICAN for publishing the interview with Berlin.

Attach.  
cc: D/S

  
STANLEY J. Grogan  
Assistant to the Director

SEP 6 1960

(DATE)

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FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101  
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

(47)

Norman Ross  
WLS (Chicago)

August 31, 1960

760-7177

ROSS DISCUSSES BERLIN CASE

Norman Ross at 6:45 P.M. over WLS (Chicago):

"I should like to direct what I have to say tonight to a Chicagoan I've never met. His name is Robert Berlin. He's 28. He lives in a near north side bachelor apartment. He's vice president of a sales company at 200 West Menominee here in Chicago.

"I'd like, too, to direct these remarks to the many friends I have on the Chicago American, a newspaper that last night headlined on the front page Mr. Berlin's story.

"I believe that his story, if true, is one he should not have revealed and which they should not have printed. Yes, I know about freedom of the press. Mr. Berlin says in a big heading before his trip to the USSR he was approached by a man claiming to be an agent of our super secret and incredibly valuable CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY. After proper credentials were shown he was asked if he would use his good memory to make certain mental observations while he was in the USSR and report them on his return.

"Tourists, he said he was told, are often better at acquiring information than our trained agents. After thinking over this request from his government Berlin decided to refuse. And why did he run out of it? The main reason was the risk involved. He also said he didn't think it was right that a tourist should spy.

"He said he was offered no money but probably that would have come if he had accepted the job, something I rather question. Herbert Hoover, for one, never accepted a penny for being President of the United States, because he felt that this was one way he could repay the country that had done so much for him.

"Herbert Philbrick makes a special point of saying that the FBI not only paid him nothing except expenses but specifically said to him, if you do this for your country you do so at your own risk. If you are caught by the reds or are exposed as a red by your own fellow Americans, what you do you do at your own risk, and just because you love your country.

"Why is Mr. Berlin telling his story now? Now at the very moment it can be used most effectively by Soviet propagandists around the globe and especially inside the USSR where they are engaged in a spy scare that is getting to ridiculous proportions. According to the American again they're doing so, quote because the government has complained recently of American tourists being harassed while traveling in Russia, end of quote.

"He admits that he's never heard of any other tourist being approached by an officer from the CIA. A lot of people, he said, told me I would get into trouble telling this story. But I believe in expressing what I think.

"There's a sentence, a direct quotation from him, that I'd like to tear apart a bit, because I'm afraid it shows an incredible and rather frightening naivete on the part of Mr. Robert Berlin and the press. He won't get into trouble. The CIA agent might, thanks to Mr. Berlin's big mouth. His country will get into trouble, because he's fed grist into the Soviet propaganda mill.

"Of course, it's grist. Can't you see the headline reproduced in Pravda, which we saw in the American last night, 'I refuse to spy for the U.S.: Executive.' A banner headline, 'CIA asks me to spy for the USA,' a banner across the front page of Izvestia or trumpeted to the world via Radio Moscow.

"I believe in expressing what I think, says this near north side bachelor. He thinks about the personal risk involved in accepting a very simple assignment, one to keep his eyes and ears open and to report back bits of information which might fit somehow into a gigantic and vitally important jigsaw puzzle.

"But I can't think he thought very deeply about Soviet propaganda. We just heard Paul Harvey talk about the headlines in tomorrow's newspaper, about the ex-officer from the OSS, the former professor who is behind the Iron Curtain working on Latin American affairs."

Mr. Ross then discussed the Stern case and about two young tourists asked to leave Russia.

"Tourists have been approached by these young people for several years. Nothing has been done about them by the Soviets and suddenly two of them have picked up and made examples of, even accused of being agents of the CIA. Among our tourists, like Mr. Berlin, come into the situation, came to Moscow as members of tourist groups and youth delegations.

"Here again the Robert Berlin case can be made grist for the Soviet propaganda mill. (Indistinguishable name of Russian newspaper) said that other American tourists were indignant, quote, when they learned that, quote, next to them were spies during their tour (?), end of quote. With Mr. Berlin's uncalled for admission to bolster their claims, according to his remarks, it not only discredits our intelligence efforts but also makes it more difficult for ordinary Russian citizens to talk to American tourists, make it far more difficult, too, for our tourists to find any Russian who would dare talk to them.

"By shooting off his mouth -- and that's what he was -- Mr. Berlin, it seems to me, has done a disservice he probably doesn't dream of. I wonder if his getting his picture in the paper was worth it. I doubt it, if he really thinks this thing through."

Mr. Ross talked about the two missing employees of the National Security Agency.

"I've ranged very far from my announced topic tonight. I'll have to come back to it tomorrow night. But I have a purpose. I don't believe in finding communists under every bed. I don't believe in wrapping ourselves in the American flag and getting hysterical about our Americanism.

"I do believe we are living in a most Machiavellian world and our enemy is the most dangerous and the most implacable. And when a young man like 28-year-old Chicago bachelor-businessman Robert Berlin has a chance to serve his country in a small and simple way, I don't think he should turn his country down because of the risk. I don't think he should blab to newspapers. I don't think the newspapers should print his story.

"It's difficult to pass final judgment based on one account, but insofar as that account is accurate I would be forced to say, and it's only one man's opinion, that Robert Berlin, Chicagoan, was wrong."